



DAVID SANDERS, Ph.D.
Director

County of Los Angeles DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, California 90020
(213) 351-5602

October 21, 2004

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair Pro Tem
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David Sanders, Ph.D. 
Director

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SEPTEMBER 21, 2004 BOARD AGENDA ITEM #3 RE: CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

On September 21, 2004, following the fatality of a 4-year-old foster child who had been rejected for a lung transplant, the Board of Supervisors directed the Department of Children and Family Services to develop protocols with hospitals specifically relating to transplant cases or the provision of other extraordinary medical care; and to ensure that the Department has an adequate number of foster homes that are qualified to care for children in need of transplants or other extraordinary medical care.

A protocol was developed with hospitals in Los Angeles County specifically relating to transplant cases or the provision of other extraordinary medical care. Hospital transplant coordinators were identified, and contacted. Transplant coordinators were asked that in the event they have an identified Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) child who requires extraordinary medical care and/or transplant, they will contact Dr. Charles Sophy, Medical Director of the Department of Children and Family Services, phone number (213) 351-5614, e-mail address – sophyc@dcfs.co.la.ca.us. Subsequently, after contacting all hospital transplant coordinators, the protocol was faxed to all facilities (please see attached).

Regarding the number of foster homes that are qualified to care for children in need of transplants or other extraordinary medical care, Department staff from Specialized and Alternative Services Program – Medically Fragile Section and Foster & Adoption Recruitment Section has been working in collaboration with stakeholders from Rancho Los Amigos Hospital to develop Specialized Acute Foster Home Environment

(S.A.F.E.). The program and curriculum development has also included the State's Community Care Licensing and Foster and Kinship Care Education. This effort began approximately one year ago.

The goal of the SAFE Program, which is funded by Las Floristas, is to recruit, train and support foster parents to meet the needs of medically fragile children. The theme of the training is "a home for each child in the County who is faced not only with a serious disability, but no home as well." The first series of SAFE training began on Thursday, September 9, 2004. Participants have been meeting every Thursday for the past five weeks at Rancho Los Amigos Hospital. Once the Rancho Los Amigos protocol is implemented countywide, SAFE plans to sponsor training and support meetings periodically. Participants in this first series comprise experienced foster family caregivers receptive to placements from the Medical Placement Units.

The goal of the Department is to continue to work in collaboration with SAFE to expand this Program throughout Los Angeles County. As a result, we are planning the following next steps upon the conclusion of our first series:

- Evaluate the strengths and needs of the SAFE curriculum/model
- Explore the feasibility of expanding the Program to other hospitals
- Expand the training to include caring for children in need of transplants
- Develop protocols with hospitals, if necessary, to implement SAFE and/or a similar program designed to recruit, train & support caregivers for medically fragile children
- Develop a plan to recruit prospective caregivers with a medical background i.e. physical therapists, nurses

The Department continues to exert ongoing efforts to ensure that there are adequate numbers of foster homes and qualified caregivers to meet the children's specialized needs. This task is extremely challenging due to the requirements of this role, including that of substitute mother, skilled nurse and advocate for children and/or teens that are among the most vulnerable served by the Department.

The Permanency Resource Division targets recruitment of foster homes with the goal of servicing the medically fragile population, among others. One of the ongoing efforts of the Department is to recruit foster care providers who are in the medical profession. This will ensure that the skills and expertise of the caregiver can provide the optimum medical care for the children.

The medical placement section works with those children and adolescents who are referred to the Department for allegations of abuse and neglect and who also have serious medical conditions. Prior to placement of any of these children in any foster home, the foster parent must meet certain special criteria. This includes two years of foster care experience or training as a medical professional, participation in sixteen hours of pre-service training and receipt of specific training on the care the child and

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his/her medical needs from the hospital prior to discharge. This would include any child with a transplant or other condition rendering them in need of extraordinary medical care.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (213) 351-5600 or your staff may contact Helen Berberian, Board Relations manager at (213) 351-5530.

DS:CS:II

Attachments

c: Chief Administrative Office
County Counsel
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors



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October 15, 2004

Dear Transplant Coordinator,

In the event that you have an identified Department of Children and Family Services child who is requiring extraordinary medical care and/or transplant, I am requesting that you contact my office so that I may become involved in the process.

Contact information:

Dr. Charles J. Sophy, FACN
425 Shatto Place
Los Angeles, Ca 90020
Telephone number: (213) 351-5614
E-mail address: sophyc@dcfs.co.la.ca.us

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Dr. Charles J. Sophy, FACN
Medical Director

TRANSPLANT COORDINATORS

Facility	Coordinator	Phone Number	Fax Number
USC University Hospital	Dr. Brad Selby (liver, kidney, and pancreas) Contact person: Socorro Julie Stern (heart, and lung)	(323) 442-5799 (323) 442-8500	(323) 442-8696
LAC/USC	Same as USC University Hospital	(323) 226-2622	
Children Hospital of Los Angeles	Stephanie Jonhson, RN (Administrator) Barbara Gross (liver)	(323) 669-5454 (323)-669-5595	(323) 671-3612 (323)-913-2865
St. Vincent Medical Center	Diana Lugo (vice-president over Specialty Services) Contact person: Veronica Blanch Lozada (kidney, and pancreas) Ana Oh (liver) Jossie Fuentes (heart)	(213) 484-7025 (213) 484-6309 (213) 484-5551 (213) 484-7676	(213) 207-5815
City of Hope	Melanie Paterson (bone marrow)	(626) 256-4673 EXT. 64554	(626) 930-5432

Facility	Coordinator	Phone Number	Fax Number
Cedar Sinai Medical Center	Carmen Cuellar (administrator heart, and lung) Contact person: Tania	(310) 423-3851	(310) 423-0127
	Linda Piponiano (heart)	(310) 423-3851	(310) 423-0127
	Brenda Kerney (lung)	(310) 423-1837	(310) 423-0127
	Zahir Ali (administrator, bone marrow)	(310) 423-5351	(310) 423-2320
	Patricia Van Strien (bone marrow)	(310) 423-5351	(310) 423-2320
	Joytte Jagolino (administrator liver, pancreas, and kidney)	(310) 423-4627	(310) 423-8208
	Michelyn Telpiey (pre-transplant liver, pancreas, kidney)	(310) 423-4627	(310) 360- 9475
UCLA School of Medicine	Nanci Flores (administrator over all transplants).	(310) 794-2688	310-794-2792